

The Purpose of The Different Accounts of The Creation Story

By Thrita Sims 503 Old Testament

Many scholars debate the notion of different accounts of Creation found in Genesis. Some

attribute to the idea that different authors recorded Genesis. Others attribute the accounts

to the different styles of writing. The reasons for the different accounts of the Creation

narrative are to give a more detailed description of the creation of man, to summarize and

reiterate the formation of Creation and to reveal the different titles and Names of God.

Two accounts of Creation were written to give a more detailed description of the creation

of man made in God's image. The first scripture encountered Genesis 1:1-31 was more

structured and ordered versions of everything. Basically, the pattern found in Genesis 1:3-25

was: God said it, God made it, and God said, "that's good". Psalm 33:6-9 "By the Word of The

Lord creation was formed. For He spoke and it was done. He commanded and it stood fast."

In Psalm 104:24, the writer focused on the many and various works of God's creation which

supported the fact of the detailed and uniformed account about the making of different

and diverse creatures found on earth. According to The Apologetic Press Article 2194,

Genesis 1, "...gives a broad outline of the events of the Creation week which reaches its

climax with the origin of mankind in the very image of God." After everything was made, God

declared it good and finally reached the apex, the ultimate, the height of all things, the

creation of man. Psalm 8:4 asked the question about all of the extraordinary things made

in heaven and earth, "What is man that thou art mindful of him?"

In Genesis 2:4-25, the second account that was more spontaneous and dramatic was

focused on man. The strict attention to the creation of man was necessary because of the

following story concerning The Fall of man. Genesis 2:7 stressed the fact that God breathed

into his (man's) nostrils the breath of life and man became a living soul. According to

Gerald Klingbell's Genesis Creation Account and Its Reverberations in The Old Testament

"Humanity is presented as being the center of God's creative purposes in The Bible. Genesis

1-2 serves not as a mere theological polemic proclaiming that Yahweh is The Creator, but

It also serves as a polemic both historically and descriptively." The Ministry Magazine

went on further to say, "The Bible presents humans as the crowning achievement of God's

creative work."

The Creation accounts were summaries and reiterations of each other. Genesis 1:3-26

gave an exact six day chronological order of the creation activities which God said was good.

Psalm 19:1 joyfully asserted a hymnal exclamation, “The heavens declare the Glory of God;

and the firmament sheweth His Handiwork.” Bible Odysse.org reported “The first account

appears neat by organized into three days of preparation followed by three days of actual

formation. Each day concludes the expression ‘and there was x.’ By the seventh day all

creation exists in its proper sphere and God rests. This orderly pattern suggests an orderly

universe.” Got questions.org cuts through the chase and shed light on the purpose of the

two accounts of creation, “The idea of two differing creation accounts is a common

misinterpretation of these two passages (Genesis 1 and 2) which in fact describe the same

creation event. By considering the two creation accounts individually and then reconciling

them, we see that God describes the sequence of creation in Genesis 1 then clarifies its most

important details especially of the sixth day in Genesis 2. There is no contradiction here,

merely a common literary device describing an event from the general to the specific.”

The real point of Genesis 2 is found in verses 15-25, The Fall of Man. Genesis 2:7 gives

elaborate details in the creation of man because he is the major figure and main character

in the narrative concerning the Fall of Man. The Bible Study for Catholics states “Genesis 1

is a prologue to the rest. How fitting that this poetic tribute (Genesis 1) is placed at the

start of Genesis. It functions like an 'Entrance Hymn' to the great drama of salvation

(Genesis 2:15-25 The Fall of Man). “

The names and titles of God are revealed in the two accounts found in Genesis 1 and 2.

The title Elohim mentioned in Genesis 1:1-28 means all powerful, almighty, like no other.

In Genesis 2:4-25 the name Yahweh is joined together with Elohim and used to tell the

narrative about the creation of man into the Garden of Eden and finally ends with the

Fall of Man. Bible odyssey.org states, “The differences in accounts reflect the unique way

In which God's nature and character is conceptualized. In Genesis 1, God is distant. In

Genesis 2, God is depicted as a human-like figure, like a potter working with clay, hands-on

approach to creation. God, in this version seems more accessible than the transcendent

creator of Genesis 1.” Biologos.org says that there are different names for God in Genesis 1

and 2. “First we should note that the creation accounts in Genesis 1 and 2 consistently use

different names for God. Where as the first account uses the generic term *Elohim* (Hebrew for

God) right up to Genesis 2:3. The second account uses the compound name YHWH *Elohim*

starting in Genesis 2:4 (this continues until Genesis 3:24 which is the formal end of the

Garden narrative about human creation and the origin of sin). This compound name allows

The Garden narrative to serve as a link between the opening creation account of

Genesis 1:1-2:3 which introduces the Creator God and the post-Garden narrative which

predominantly uses YHWH the unique covenant name for the God of Israel.”

To better understand the purpose of the two creation stories, a comparison shown

between the two accounts may shed a brighter light on the subject. According to The House

Church Network Association , “The first account is certainly better knownIn Genesis 1,

The first thing created is the heavens, the earth, and light. This is followed by (2) a separation

of the earth from the sky (actually a separation of the waters of chaos that were thought to

surround the sky and the disk-like earth). Then (3) dry land and vegetation, (4) sun, moon,

and stars, (5) birds and fish, and (6) land animals and the humans (both male and female).

The second account is quite different. Genesis 2 doesn't use time specifications, there is no

‘on the first day God created ...’ Instead the account begins with a statement that the earth

and heavens were created. Verse 5 tells us no plants yet grew on the earth because there

had been no rain and there were no humans to till the ground. Next God creates a human.”

The House Church Network Association continues to say, "For those doing this study

from most translations including King James Revised Standard, and the New

International to name only a few, the answer is suggested by a comparison of the Names

of between chapters 1 and 2. If you look at the name in the first chapter you'll see only the

word God used never Lord, Lord God or anything else. But in 2:4b through chapter 5

the term LORD GOD is used (note the capital letters in most translations indicate the

Hebrew *Yahweh* the personal name of God)." The House Church Network Association

conclude in part their explanation, "The first account tells of a God who is orderly and

powerful. The second account is more concerned with sharing a personal and responsive

God to the humans and to creation. Both accounts speak of the same God. Both share

important aspects about God., and both accounts are valid and helpful in our under-

standing of creations relationship with the Creator."

The comparison of the two accounts continue with The Compelling Truth who asked the

compelling question, "Do Genesis 1 and 2 record two different creation accounts? To read

through Genesis 1 and 2, its understandable to conclude they refer to two different creation

accounts. Genesis 1 records the creation and development of the world: light and dark on

day one, the sky and water on day two, separation of land and water plus vegetation on

day three, stars and moon on day four, animals on day five, and six and finally the first man

and woman on day six. Genesis 2 starts immediately with God resting on the seventh day,

then says there was no bushes of the field. After this observation, God created Adam, has

him name the animals, and then takes Eve from Adam's side." The Compelling Truth conclude

. "When the Bible gives an account the literal translation is always the one we should

assume first. Genesis 1:1-2:3 give a summary of creation while Genesis 2:4-25 gives details

regarding the creation of Adam and Eve."

Jason Lisle (on Monday, August 31, 2015) wrote an article in the Institute for Creation

Research (posted by the icr.org) that angered critics who say that the two creation accounts

are contradictory. He said, "Critics of the Bible sometimes claim the first and second chapters

of Genesis represent two different creation accounts and that these two accounts are clearly

contradictory. They allege the order of events is different. Genesis 1 teaches that plants and

birds were created before people. But some critics claim Genesis 2 teaches the opposite.

Genesis 2 teaches that Adam was created before Eve. But doesn't Genesis 1 indicate they

were created at the same time? As is often the case, the critics just haven't read the text

carefully. Genesis 1:1-2:4 records an overview of the cosmic events of the creation week.

It gives the order of events and a broad summary of what happened on each day. Genesis

2:5-25 is not a second or different account of creation, rather it's a more detailed report of

of the Adam-and-Eve focused events of Day Six. This should be clear because this chapter

describes in greater detail the creation of Adam and Eve events that Genesis 1:26-30 indicate

happened on the sixth day. And what about the claim that Genesis 1:27 teaches that Adam

and Eve were made at the same time? The text only states that God created both man and

the woman on Day Six. It says nothing at all about the precise timing. It is only by reading the

details in Genesis 2 that we learn that some time elapsed, perhaps several hours, between

the creation of Adam and the creation of Eve the sixth day. As with most alleged Bible errors,

the resolution is found by simply reading the text carefully and thinking logically."

An article written by Bob Deffinbaugh compares and contrasts Genesis 1 and 2 and vaguely

presents a purpose for the different account. In the [Bible .org](#) the article reads: "The reader

can see that there are really two creation accounts, not exactly represented by the chapter

divisions. The first creation account is found in our text Genesis 1:1-23. The second is found

in Genesis 2:4-25. The first account begins at the first day of creation and end with the

seventh day. The second account commences in about the middle of the creation week.

while the first account describes how God turned chaos into creation (days 1-4, verses 1-20),

making it possible to create life (days 5-6, verses 21-31) the second account takes up at the

point of God creating life. The first account describes creation by a formula, which is repeated

through the account. The second account takes a more problem-solving approach. As I have

studied this text, I have become convinced that Genesis 2:4-25 is written as a preface to the

account of The Fall of man.”

On the deleriumsrealm.com website, there is no purpose stated for the accounts of

creation in Genesis. This article does not claim to have meaning or reasoning, it just compares

the accounts. “A reading of Genesis reveals two distinctly different creation stories: the

first spans Genesis 1:1-2:3 and the second continues from Genesis 2:4 to the end of the third

chapter. These two accounts of creation include: a cosmocentric account of how God created

the heavens and earth out of the void. An anthropocentric account of how humanity came to

populate the earth.... The anthropocentric account differs from the cosmocentric account

in a number of ways:

- 1. Different names for God. The first refers to the Creator God as *Elohim* in Hebrew, while the second refers to the Creator as 'Lord God' or YHWH *Elohim*, YHWH God's Hebrew name.**
- 2. Different methodologies for creation: In the first, God creates through speaking. In the second, God takes physical actions (planting a Garden, breathing air in Adam's nostrils, etc).**
- 3. Different order to creation: In the first, mankind is presented as the climax of God's creation after He created vegetation and animals. Here humans male and female are created at the same time,. In the second, God first creates man, then plants vegetation in the Garden of Eden, then makes animals and finally woman."**

In conclusion, several thoughts and ideas have long debated and wondered at the notion

of the two accounts of Creation. The purpose of the different accounts of the Creation story

relates to moving from the general to the more specific details, a repetitious and retelling of

the same narrative, and the revealing of the titles and names of God.

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